

City Centre Transport Planning & Car Parking Strategy

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City of
Greater Geraldton
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City Centre Transport Planning & Car Parking Strategy

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
	1.1 OBJECTIVES	1
	1.2 STRATEGY AREA	1
	1.3 PRIORITY OF USE OF PUBLIC CAR PARKING AREAS	3
2	CAR PARKING SUPPLY	4
	2.1 OPTIMISING EXISTING CAR PARKING SUPPLY	4
	2.2 FUTURE CAR PARKING SUPPLY	4
3	STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL CAR PARKING	5
	3.1 FUNDING.....	5
	3.2 SPECIFIED AREA RATE (SAR)	5
	3.3 REVIEW OF CAR PARKING CHARGES.....	5
	3.4 ACQUIRING LAND AND DEVELOPING CAR PARKING	6
	3.5 MULTI-DECK CAR PARKING	6
4	CAR PARKING STANDARDS	7
	4.1 LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME PROVISIONS	7
	4.2 CAR PARKING SIGNAGE.....	7
	4.3 DESIGN STANDARDS	8
	4.4 TIME LIMITS	8
	4.5 LIGHTING AND SECURITY STANDARDS	8
	4.6 PARKING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.....	9
	4.7 LOADING AND UNLOADING ZONES	9
5	STRATEGIES TO REDUCE DEMAND	10
	5.1 PUBLIC TRANSPORT.....	10
	5.2 ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORT	11
	5.3 TAXI STANDS	13
	5.4 TOURIST COACH, BUS AND CARAVAN PARKING BAYS	13
6	CONCLUSION	14

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the City of Greater Geraldton's City Centre Transport Planning & Car Parking Strategy are to:

- (a) Provide an adequate supply of short and long-term car parking spaces that are conveniently located and are easily accessible to support the desired growth of the City Centre;
- (b) Develop an integrated public and private car parking network, which is flexible to accommodate changes in car parking demands over time, however does not detrimentally affect the environment, traffic or pedestrian flows;
- (c) Ensure that the provision of car parking facilities does not diminish the urban character, cause a loss of building stock or result in a poor urban design outcome;
- (d) Ensure that an over supply of car parking does not occur that discourages alternative forms of transport and actively promote these other sustainable modes of transport within the City Centre;
- (e) Control and manage the car parking supply/demand balance through ownership of properties for the establishment of publicly available parking facilities; and
- (f) Actively encourage the minimisation of greenhouse emissions by designing parking and other associated facilities so as to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport (such as public transport, bicycling and walking).

1.2 STRATEGY AREA

The Strategy applies to the land currently zoned "Regional Centre" in Local Planning Scheme No. 1. This Strategy area is further divided into three distinct precinct areas being; City Centre Core, Fringe and Batavia Coast Marina, as shown in Figure 1 below.

With respect to the future land use development and the provision of additional car parking bays within these precincts, the general intent is outlined below.

1.2.1 City Centre Core

General Intent: To provide short-term car parking facilities, both kerbside and in car parking stations, in the pedestrian-oriented core area and to operate in such a manner as to support the commercial and retail viability of the City Centre. All day car parking may be made available to increase occupancy rates.

1.2.2 Fringe

General Intent: To provide short-term kerbside facilities, long-term car parking stations, promote pedestrian access to the City Centre Core and to restrict long-term (non-residential) parking in predominantly residential areas.

1.2.3 Batavia Coast Marina

General Intent: The Batavia Coast Marina precinct area will generally be treated as a self-contained precinct with the City Centre Core and the Fringe precinct areas accommodating the bulk of the City Centre's future development and therefore will contain the majority of additional car parking facilities.

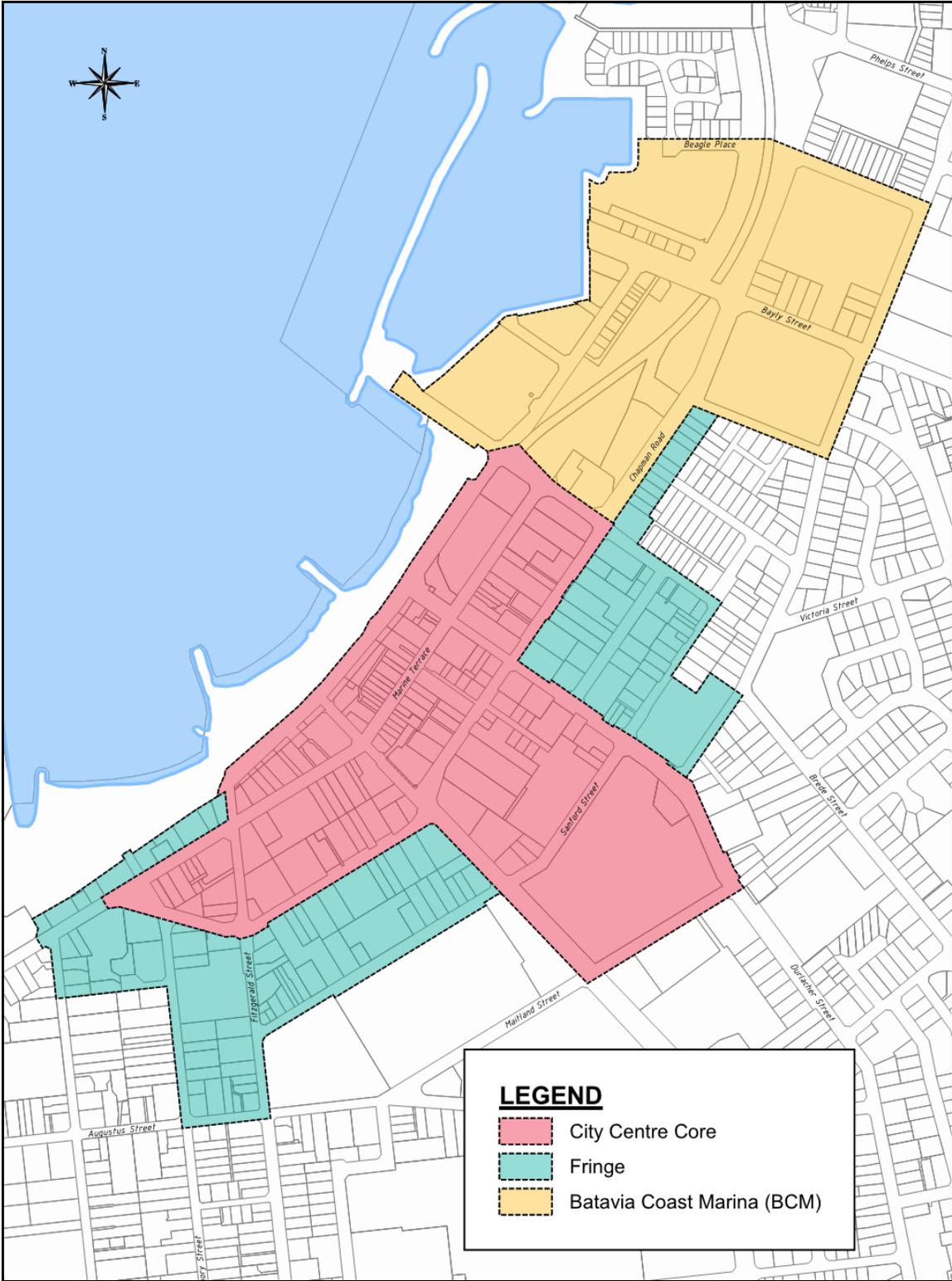


Figure 1 - Precinct Areas

1.3 PRIORITY OF USE OF PUBLIC CAR PARKING AREAS

This Strategy is intended to prioritise the utilisation of public car parking facilities within the City Centre as follows:

1. Shoppers;
2. Tourists and Visitors; and
3. All day parkers and Workers.

Night entertainment patrons will generally have reciprocal parking from the above users.

Short-term parking will be given priority within City Centre Core precinct to ensure priority groups 1 and 2 as prescribed above are well catered for.

The greatest demand for long-term City Centre parking comes from city centre workers. The City should encourage strategies promoting the use of all day car parking facilities located on the immediate fringes of the City Centre, which are linked by strong pedestrian connections that are safe, comfortable and vibrant. In the long-term an effective and convenient public transport network may compliment this.



2 CAR PARKING SUPPLY

2.1 OPTIMISING EXISTING CAR PARKING SUPPLY

The City should continue to promote opportunities to utilise existing car parking facilities to ensure that the demand for parking is spread more evenly between on and off-street car parking. The City should promote strategies that:

- (a) Shift some of the on-street demand to the off-street car parks, which are under utilised during peak demand periods;
- (b) Increase the turnover of cars in the high demand on-street parking bays by selectively reducing time limits, taking into consideration the needs of the abutting businesses;
- (c) Improve directional signage to ensure that good information on the supply of parking is available to drivers;
- (d) Improve street lighting and security so that the public accepts greater walking distances and increased use is made of the available parking supply;
- (e) Promote public information on the location and availability of the City Centre's car parking facilities;
- (f) Control and manage the parking supply/demand balance through ownership of properties for the establishment of publicly available parking; and
- (g) Encourage private car parking facilities to be made available for public use in the evening and on weekends.

2.2 FUTURE CAR PARKING SUPPLY

Future car parking supply in the City Centre will be influenced by a number of factors including growing workplace and resident population, additional commercial floor space, rising fuel prices, increasing use of public and other modes of transport and land use demands.

The majority of future car parking bays within the City Centre will be provided as a result of new development or re-development requirements. The City may provide additional parking bays within the City Centre over and above those provided by developers from the funds derived under Clause 3.1 of this Strategy.

The City may modify the location and staging of new car parking stations if there are significant changes in land use demands, long-term parking demands, growth patterns, land assembly, increased use of public transportation, conversion of private car parking facilities to public and cost efficiency. The City should monitor the supply of both public and private car parking facilities annually and make adjustments taking into account the above factors.

3 STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL CAR PARKING

3.1 FUNDING

The City may fund the provision of car parking facilities, which includes both on and off-street, within the City Centre by one or more of the following mechanisms:

Cash-in-Lieu:

From developers, as provided for in the Local Planning Scheme;

Specified Area Rate (SAR):

The City may choose to apply a SAR to all or part of the City Centre as deemed to be receiving the benefit from the provision of parking;

User Pays Charges:

The City should review fees and/or introduce paid parking on-street and at its parking stations as is deemed necessary and appropriate;

Fines and Penalties:

The excess of revenue over expenditure, achieved from the policing of parking areas within the City Centre should be transferred to a separate parking fund;

Allocation from General Revenue:

The City will consider the allocation of funds from general revenue towards the purchase of land for parking and the construction of parking areas within the City Centre;

Privately Funded and Operated Car Parking Facilities:

The City may consider and approve any financially viable option for public car parking facilities within the City Centre should it be consistent with the objectives of the Strategy. Joint Venture car parking facilities may also be considered by the City.

All funds raised from the application of any of the funding mechanisms outlined in this clause should be transferred to a separate parking fund, to be used as expenditure on improvements towards car parking, public transport, pedestrian access, cycling facilities and infrastructure by the City, especially where these will reduce the demand for parking.

3.2 SPECIFIED AREA RATE (SAR)

The City may, in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*, implement a Specified Area Rate (SAR) for all properties located within the City Centre. Funds raised through the implementation of the SAR should be held in the parking fund, to be used as expenditure on improvements towards car parking, public transport, pedestrian access, cycling facilities and infrastructure by the City, especially where these will reduce the demand for parking.

3.3 REVIEW OF CAR PARKING CHARGES

As a demand management technique, the City should evaluate the level of charges in respect to kerbside parking and parking stations.

3.4 ACQUIRING LAND AND DEVELOPING CAR PARKING

In order to ensure that car parking facilities within the City Centre and the periphery are strategically located, sufficiently sized, linked to supporting infrastructure, support adjoining land uses, are appropriately priced and capable of redevelopment, the City should pursue the reservation and or acquisition of land for car parking purposes in accordance with the objectives of this Strategy.

The acquisition of land for the purpose of developing future car parking facilities should be funded from the parking fund, subject to analysis of the cost benefits of acquisition, and analysis of the pricing of car parking to ensure a net positive financial return to the City for its investment.

Land for the development of future car parking facilities may also be ceded to the City by a developer as a requirement of development and or in replacement of a cash-in-lieu payment to the City for a car parking shortfall as provided for in the Local Planning Scheme.

It is intended that car parking facilities and alternative transport options within the City Centre operate as an interdependent shared network in a similar manner as the provision of public open space, which is provided and developed for the collective benefit of the overall municipality.

The emphasis on alternative transport options is in recognition of the need to provide our community equitable and timely access to services. Not everyone has private cars, so the benefits of additional car parking are not able to be realised by all, and excessive use and associated public costs of private vehicles are not of collective benefit for the community.

3.5 MULTI-DECK CAR PARKING

As car parking demands increase in the City Centre and available land becomes a premium, the justification for multi-deck car parking increases. Without support from other levels of government to fund demand reduction or alternative transport, multi-deck car parks will have to be built. Due to the impact multi-decked car parking facilities have on the streetscape any developments should sleeve parking structures behind 'single aspect' mixed uses such as retail or commercial.

Commercial developments should be designed to capitalise on the street exposure whilst maintaining pedestrian amenity by not fronting the streets with parking. This may assist the City in cost recovery for this type of parking facility by enabling the leasing of commercial floorspace.

Multi-decked car parking structures whether built on private or public property shall (where possible) be constructed as an integrated component of a development rather than a stand alone structure or single purpose land use. External appearance, such as bulk, design, colour, aesthetic and compatibility will be a high priority for the City when assessing the suitability of any proposed parking structure.

In addition issues such as security, pedestrian access, lighting, signage, parking fees, management structures, vehicular access, disabled access, colour, mixed land uses, integration, compatibility, visual amenity, linkages with adjoining uses, landscaping, traffic management, shelter and architectural merit will need to be addressed within the overall design of the structure.

4 CAR PARKING STANDARDS

4.1 LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME PROVISIONS

The City should incorporate/amend car parking provisions in the Local Planning Scheme for the "Regional Centre" zone (and other specific areas if required) in order to achieve the objectives of this Strategy. Scheme provisions may include (but not be limited to):

- a) An appropriate rate of car parking spaces required per m² of floor area (as defined in the Building Code) for commercial/retail developments that generates cash-in-lieu payments (as a preference) but also enables on-site parking provision;
- b) An appropriate rate of car parking spaces per dwelling unit for short-stay/tourist accommodation development that facilitates both on-site parking provision and generates cash-in-lieu payments;
- c) An appropriate rate of on-site car parking spaces per dwelling unit for permanent residential development in accordance with the R-Codes;
- d) Bicycle parking requirements and end of trip facilities; and
- e) The ability to utilise cash-in-lieu on improvements towards car parking, public transport, pedestrian access, cycling facilities and infrastructure by the City, especially where these will reduce the demand for parking.

4.2 CAR PARKING SIGNAGE

Car parking signage has an important role to play in ensuring that existing car parking facilities are utilised to their optimal potential. The City should develop a hierarchy of signage to guide the design and placement of car parking signage throughout the City Centre and along the approach roads. The types of parking signs are listed below:

Gateways Parking Directional Signs:

Tourist information and directional signage regarding the location of the major car parking facilities in the City Centre;

Distributor Road Parking Signs:

Signage located on the distributor roads surrounding the City Centre to direct drivers onto local access roads or driveways to individual car parks;

Car Park Identification and Regulation Signs:

Located at the entrance of the individual car parking facilities providing information on car parking facility identification, time limits, hours of operation, parking charges, penalties for infringements, number of parking bays, map showing location of nearby parking facilities; and

On-Street Parking Regulation Signs:

Located within the road reserve adjacent to the kerbside parking area identifying parking duration limits, parking charges, hours which restrictions apply and purpose of parking bay (eg. loading zone, motorcycle or vehicle parking).

Car parking signage standards should be developed by the City and may include the following key elements:

- Standardisation of car parking signage design;
- Colour coded signage;
- Development of a signage location plan;
- Numbering and naming of the car parking facilities; and
- Development of car parking facilities location maps.

The objective is to ensure that signage is legible, easily understood, informative, provide directions, is unobtrusive, complements the surrounding streetscape and reduces unnecessary circulation within the City Centre.

4.3 DESIGN STANDARDS

The layout and construction of all car parking facilities (both private and public car parking facilities) should be designed to ensure they are functional, standardised and incorporate required design elements including:

- landscaping (to achieve aesthetic and biodiversity outcomes);
- disabled access;
- shade, shelter;
- pedestrian linkages;
- signage;
- lighting (if required) and renewable energy generation;
- line marking;
- cycle facilities (if required);
- moped, motorbike and priority parking for electric vehicles;
- address urban design considerations including water sensitive urban design and public art;
- accommodate parking equipment (if required); and
- integrate into an overall parking facilities network.

4.4 TIME LIMITS

The objective of car parking time limits is to match trip purpose, trip duration and acceptable walking distances to the location of the parking bays. In this instance the City may regulate car parking time limits to ensure that the objectives of this Strategy are achieved.

4.5 LIGHTING AND SECURITY STANDARDS

The levels of lighting and security provided both within car parking facilities and pedestrian routes has a significant influence on the utilisation of car parking facilities, particularly at night time. In this respect car parking facilities should be designed to ensure the following:

- Visibility of the car bays;
- Activity near the car bays;
- Active interface with the surrounding development;
- Well lit parking area but without excessive light pollution;
- Activity along the pedestrian routes to/from the car parking;
- Well maintained car parking facilities;
- Security monitoring and security patrols in area; and
- Conveniently located to intended destination points.

The City should review the existing levels of lighting both within the existing car parking areas and along high demand pedestrian routes and make appropriate upgrades where necessary. For businesses which operate out of normal trading hours (eg. after 6:00pm) and which intend to utilise off-site car parking facilities through reciprocal or shared arrangement to satisfy their car parking requirements, the City may require the applicant to contribute to the upgrading of the off-site car parking facility to address issues of lighting and security. The lighting provided in car parks is preferably 100% powered by renewable energy (eg. solar).

4.6 PARKING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Parking for people with disabilities shall be a key consideration in the design of any new or existing car parking facility. Accessible car parking bays shall be designed in accordance with current Australian Standards and any other relevant standard adopted by the City.

The number of accessible car parking bays required for any development within the City Centre should be assessed at development approval stage and will be determined based on land use, floor/lot area, location analysis and the specific needs of the intended uses of the subject development. The City may require a developer to increase the overall provision and level of accessible car parking facilities for a particular development if the City determines that such a requirement would be justified to address level of service.

4.7 LOADING AND UNLOADING ZONES

The location and distribution of loading/unloading zones will be subject to on-going discussions with affected retail trades located within the City Centre. It is intended that loading/unloading zones within the City Centre should be allocated on the following criteria:

- To serve a broad retail trade catchment area and not be exclusive;
- Be strategically located in close proximity to serving retail traders;
- To operate within specified time periods;
- Operate as a dual purpose bay (loading/general parking zone);
- Does not negatively impact on the streetscape of the area;
- Does not impact on any existing access points and or parking needs of the adjoining retailers; and
- Could be relocated (if required) should the demands of the affected land uses change.



5 STRATEGIES TO REDUCE DEMAND

5.1 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The City should actively pursue strategies and incentives, which are designed to improve the provision and utilisation of public transport facilities within the City Centre in order to reduce the reliance on private motor vehicles. Public Transport infrastructure should be incorporated within the City Centre as an integrated component providing the focal point for surrounding land uses. In this respect both land use and transport planning for the City Centre will be integrated and implemented as interdependent strategies for the development of Geraldton.

To enhance Public Transport usage the City may pursue the following strategies (given the current public transport system, some of the following strategies are medium to long-term):

- a) Encourage high intensity land uses to develop along public transport corridors and around key strategic nodes, such as medium/high residential housing and retail and office uses;
- b) Encourage a broad range of household types to develop along public transport corridors and around key strategic nodes, such as single bedroom dwellings, standard 3 or 4 bedroom dwellings, group, multiple and aged persons dwellings;
- c) Prioritise infrastructure provision and improvements to public transport precincts;
- d) Provide pedestrian and bicycle linkages between the key land use nodes and along the public transport corridors;
- e) Encourage quality landscaping treatments and (if required) noise attenuation measures along the public transport corridors;
- f) Encourage development within, over, or under public transport reserves to consolidate activity within public transport precincts;
- g) Encourage reduction of car parking requirements within public transport precincts;
- h) Encourage a local street network that facilitates high quality and direct pedestrian, including disabled, access to bus stops and key land use nodes;
- i) Encourage a local street network that is highly permeable and amenable to a quality public transport service;
- j) Encourage road pavement widths suitable for bus routes where applicable;
- k) Facilitate Liveable Neighbourhood Design Principles within the City Centre, which provide for safe and amenable streets and encourages the use of public transport facilities;
- l) Incorporate public transport facilities within or adjacent to key public and community facilities;
- m) Encourage mixed use development along public transport corridors and around key strategic nodes;
- n) Support educational strategies to promote the benefits of using public transport;
- o) Require Travel Plans as part of development;

- p) Trialling temporary or permanent closure of roads;
- q) Facilitate the provision of a defined and efficient Central Area Transit system to link the key land use nodes; and
- r) Coordinate the development of supporting land uses and facilities along the main public transport corridors and around key strategic nodes to ensure the viability of an effective public transport system. Such facilities include dual use paths, community facilities, bus stops, shelter, seating, landscaping treatments, car parking stations, bicycle stations, lighting, medium and high residential housing, retail, offices, community services, public phones, post boxes, bins, rest areas and parks, commercial nodes and tourist information.

5.2 ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORT

Part of this Strategy is the promotion and implementation of alternative modes of transport to reduce the reliance on private vehicles, improve public transport facilities and improved pedestrian and cycle facilities. The following initiatives are aimed at reducing traffic volumes, conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and demand for scarce parking resources (once again some of these initiatives are medium to long-term).

5.2.1 Funds for alternative transport

The parking fund may be used to finance infrastructure improvements and incentive strategies, which are designed to reduce the reliance on the use of private transportation within the City Centre.



5.2.2 Promote car pooling by subsidising parking for high occupancy vehicles

The City should actively encourage strategies, which promote car pooling arrangements/incentives for both private and public car parking facilities. Strategies may include pricing incentives and reduced parking fee charges, time allocation extensions and free parking facilities for long-term parkers.

5.2.3 Establish bicycle parking and other end of trip facilities at public buildings and other public facilities

Bicycle parking facilities should be located along the pedestrian networks, with specific integrated bicycle networks and bicycle parking stations to be developed by the City.

5.2.4 Add bicycle parking requirements to the Local Planning Scheme provisions to incorporate bicycle stations within major developments and public facilities

Large scale developments within the City Centre may be required to incorporate bicycle parking and associated facilities within the design of any new building. Bicycle parking facilities should include cycle racks, lockers, drinking, shower and toilet facilities, access and security keys and bike locks etc. Bicycle facilities should form an integrated part of the City Centre built from and where practicable will be located within the consolidated car parking facilities.

5.2.5 Establish a free transit zone/Central Area Transit (CAT) System

This initiative would be provided to encourage residents living within a designated Free Transit Zone, such as inner city residents, to utilise the public transport network for their daily trips into the City rather than private motor vehicles. The Free Transit Zone would form part of a more extensive public transport network, which would be serviced by a CAT system.

5.2.6 Establish long-term car parking and park & ride facilities

Designated long-term parking facilities should be established on the periphery of the City Centre to accommodate all day parkers. A CAT system is recommended to be established to link long-term parking facilities with the key destination points throughout the City Centre. The viability of establishing a CAT system will be dependent on adequate funding and patronage support. Appropriate land use planning and transport planning strategies will be key factors in facilitating a viable public transport network within Geraldton.



5.3 TAXI STANDS

Taxis have a significant role in complementing the public transport system as they take people to areas where conventional forms of public transport do not operate, or carry people who can not use conventional public transport easily. The following design criteria should be used to select appropriate taxis rank sites:

- Highly visible and provide good public surveillance;
- Provide good access to the major traffic and pedestrian routes;
- Located within an active public area;
- Convenient access to public facilities (eg. toilets, public phone, bank, seating, shelter, bins and drinking facilities);
- Centrally located within strategic nodes (eg. retail, entertainment and cultural precinct areas);

- Provision for shelter and seating;
- Caters for people with disabilities and elderly access requirements;
- Integrated with other modes of public and private transport;
- Provide a frequent and predictable service to public; and
- Located within an attractive and amenable area.

5.4 TOURIST COACH, BUS AND CARAVAN PARKING BAYS

Tourist coach, bus and caravan parking/pick up facilities should form an integral part of the overall Geraldton transport network and integrated into the future land use and transportation planning for the City Centre. Supporting infrastructure including adequate seating, shelter, lighting, dual use paths, bins, tourist information and signage should be incorporated.



6 CONCLUSION

The Strategy provides high level guidance on the management of transport planning and car parking within the City's 'Regional Centre' zone and outlines a number of mechanisms and standards which can be utilised in order to achieve the listed objectives.

It is intended that the Strategy will be used to inform and guide further decision-making relating to transport planning, car parking and alternative modes of transport. It encompasses a holistic approach to transit planning and car parking thereby enabling all options to be evaluated over time.

